



Good Neighbor Program

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issue 22

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Our purpose in founding the city was not to make any one class in it surpassingly happy, but to make the city as a whole as happy as possible.

Socrates in Plato's *The Republic*



REGIONAL NEWS

SITES & DESIGNS



The Denver Federal Center, in Lakewood, CO, as seen in an aerial view.

Master Plan Charrette Capitalizes on Massive Opportunity

On March 2nd and 3rd, GSA's Rocky Mountain Region brought together local and national experts for a two-day master plan charrette regarding the Denver Federal Center. The 670-acre federal campus lies several miles west of downtown Denver in the burgeoning suburb of Lakewood and comprises more than 4 million square feet of office, lab, and warehouse space for 24 federal agencies and 6,000 federal employees. In addition, the campus receives 4,000 visitors each day and another 2 million square feet of federal leased space is located nearby. Yet much of the campus is still undeveloped. GSA's Lisa Morpurgo is leading a master planning effort to coordinate future needs of federal agencies with Lakewood's long-term development goals, while bringing much-needed amenities to the site. Charrette participants discussed how new residential, commercial, and mixed-use development can create a cohesive whole from existing features and future plans—including a new 380-bed hospital and new light rail station on the site's western edge that will link the campus to downtown Denver (http://www.rtd-denver.com/fastracks/west_corridor.html). The first day of the charrette included a working session and a public open house in the evening which attracted 300 citizens. On day two, the team refined options and invited critique from a panel of local development experts, city officials, and three GSA national peers. Despite many complex challenges, the project team has assembled the right stakeholders and an inclusive approach that will maximize this tremendous opportunity. Contact Lisa Morpurgo, 303.236-8000 x5039.

Building a Gateway to the National Mall

GSA's National Capital Region is in the midst of an exciting public space master planning project that will turn a confusing, barren area near the National Mall into a lively public amenity, while improving site security around four federal buildings. The project is the result of clever forethought in the regional office, prompted by the planned modernization of adjacent federal buildings: Cohen, Switzer, Humphrey, and a former FDA research laboratory. The four buildings comprise the in-

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Planned modernization projects in Southwest Washington, DC provide an opportunity to create a new, lively public space.

tersection of 3rd and C Streets in Southwest Washington, DC and lie just north of a busy Metro stop. As a primary gateway between the subway and the landmarks that millions visit each year—including the U.S. Botanical Garden, U.S. Capitol, and National Museum of the American Indian—and the daily workplace of thousands of federal workers, this intersection represents a prime opportunity to create a vital public amenity. Rios Clementi Hale Studios, a Los Angeles landscape architecture firm, will complete a plan for the area by the end of April, and their suggestions will be incorporated as each of the four buildings is modernized—a creative way to realize a large-scale vision one step at a time. Contact Brian Goldstein, (202) 208-2080.



REGIONAL NEWS COLLABORATION WITH CLIENTS & COMMUNITIES

Small Downtowns, Big Difference

Hazleton and Easton, Pennsylvania both recently learned what it means to “work” with the Federal government: cooperation, collaboration, and even mutual benefit. The two towns are home to government owned Social Security Administration buildings, both of which required expansion. In Hazleton, GSA reaffirmed its commitment to the city’s Central Business District by expanding the existing SSA building. But Easton’s situation was more complicated, because the existing SSA building could not be renovated at a reasonable cost due to its location in the 100-year floodplain. GSA decided to proceed with a new leased building, which GSA, SSA and the developer planned in cooperation with the city’s own redevelopment goals for its future. The building’s design was one of many aspects to grow out of this unique collaboration between all government and local stakeholders—the city suggested a specific façade design, the developer approved, and SSA agreed it accommodated their goals for the new building. Contact Diane Campanile, (215) 446-4648.

More Good News from Albuquerque

Albuquerque, New Mexico’s Amy Biehl High School—an exemplary community-federal government partnership—has been a frequent star of *enews* over the last couple years. On September 29, 2005, a wider audience heard the school’s story at the 2005 National Trust for Historic Preservation Conference in Portland, Oregon. At a well-attended session, Lisa McCulloch and Tony Monfiletto from the Amy Biehl High School (<http://abhs.k12.nm.us/>), GSA’s Harold Hebert, and Richard Deutsch, the architect designing the restoration, detailed the adaptive reuse of Albuquerque’s former Federal Post Office and Courthouse as a new urban charter high school. Recently, the high school moved into its new home, the first high school located in the city’s center in three decades. The new school contributes to Albuquerque’s downtown economic development efforts and makes great use of a historic building that the government no longer needs. GSA Greater Southwest Region will lease the building to the school for just 100 dollars a month. Contact Brian Goldstein, (202) 208-2080.



A Mardi Gras reveler at “An Evening in the Rotunda.”

Federal Employees Show Civic Spirit for Hurricane Victims

In late August, Hurricane Katrina wracked the Gulf Coast and at once affected millions of Americans, both directly and indirectly. As a federal government agency, GSA played an important role providing supplies to rescuers, finding last-minute office space for support agencies, and relocating federal workers. And at many federal buildings, employees came together to help those affected. Three significant efforts benefited charities including the Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund (FEEA), American Red Cross, and Salvation Army, while bringing a festive community spirit to their respective federal buildings. In Seattle, the Northwest/Arctic Region raised \$30,000 with a fundraiser in the Henry M. Jackson Federal Building café that featured Southern regional favorites such as red beans and rice and gumbo. Sodexho, which operates the café, helped organize the event and prepared food with help from volunteers. The local National Treasury Employees Union and Verity Credit Union co-hosted and generously matched employee dona-

tions. In New York City, the Northeast and Caribbean Region hosted “Jambalaya and Jazz,” a sold-out Mardi Gras luncheon at 26 Federal Plaza replete with jambalaya, jazz performances by student musicians, and Mardi Gras beads and “An Evening in the Rotunda” in the Alexander Hamilton U.S. Custom House that featured authentic Mardi Gras costumes and a New Orleans magician. The events entertained, raised spirits, and provided \$3,500 for the FEEA. Contact Michael Westvold (in Seattle), (206) 220-5055 or Renee Miscione (in NY), (212) 264-0424.



REGIONAL NEWS

ACTIVE PUBLIC BUILDINGS

New ‘Dialogue’ on Public Space

On May 13th, 14th, and 18th the *Dialogue Project* will be landing at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center in downtown Washington, DC. *Dialogue* is a traveling public art installation that is making its way cross-country—and back. The exhibit features nine seven by eight foot panels covered with thousands of inspirational and insightful quotes on themes like love, politics, creativity, community, and art (<http://www.dialogueproject.net/index.shtml>). A documentary film crew is accompanying the exhibit as it journeys across the country. Over the next year and a half, *Dialogue* will visit key public spaces in more than two-dozen cities, including Los Angeles, Flagstaff, Eugene, Little Rock, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, and Santa Fe. The notable locations along the way will range from San Francisco’s Union Square to New York’s Times Square. Visitors to DC in May should look forward to finding it in one of that city’s great urban places—the Reagan Building’s Woodrow Wilson Plaza. This exhibit, which invites both contemplation and conversation, is a fantastic example of the range of civic events that can occur in federal public spaces. The *Dialogue Project* is still looking to find locations during the tour, so please contact the Urban Development/Good Neighbor program if you have suggested venues. Contact Frank Giblin (202) 501-1856.



Artist Jim Campbell lights up the night at Denver’s Byron Rogers U.S. Courthouse.

Smart Art Makes Security Subtler

In Denver, GSA’s Rocky Mountain Region has recently completed a project at the Byron Rogers U.S. Courthouse that cleverly combines perimeter security and contemporary art. The Art in Architecture project, by artist Jim Campbell, is a kinetic work that enlivens and activates the Champa Street façade of the courthouse. A highly abstracted panel of lights on the building face depicts scenes of the American West, while a cluster of light boxes in the landscaped edge below simultaneously varies in intensity. Similar light boxes along the sidewalk create a mini light show as pedestrians pass by, thus deemphasizing the small concrete wall that creates greater security for the courthouse. Campbell, an internationally-known artist, was chosen specifically because of his interest in human activity. Capturing this interest on the courthouse façade not only enlivens a previously uninteresting blank wall, but shows the innovative ways artists can help ensure that public space is enhanced, not impacted, by increased security requirements. Contact Janet Preisser, (303) 236-8000 x5248.



The shop windows of the former Rich’s building describe the rich history of this Atlanta landmark.

Keeping the Story of an Atlanta Icon Alive

In October, Jeffrey Jensen, Preservation Specialist in GSA’s Southeast Sunbelt Region, told museum professionals at the Southeastern Museums Conference how a partnership between GSA, the Atlanta History Center, and Georgia State University (GSU) has kept the history of one of the city’s landmarks alive. Rich’s, Atlanta’s famed department store, remained a link to the past even as the city changed dramatically during the 20th century. When Rich’s closed in 1991, its historic downtown building became part of the Sam Nunn Federal Center, and Jensen took it upon himself to ensure that Atlanta would not forget the important role that Rich’s played in the city’s modernization and cultural change. With fellow students in GSU’s Heritage Preservation program, Jensen organized “*Rich’s: The Store that Married a City*,” an exhibition that tells the store’s history in its display windows with artifacts, photographs, and descriptive text. Jensen and his co-curators told the conference audience how this public use of the federal building has increased accessibility of the suburban History Center’s unique resources, maintained the

historic building's presence in the public realm, and enlivened the downtown area around the federal campus. GSA associates interested in presenting similar stories in public buildings should visit the beautifully-installed exhibition, which will be on display for at least five more years. Contact Jeffrey Jensen, (404) 562-1354.

●●●●● NATIONAL NEWS

Who Knows Our Properties Better Than Property Managers?

GSA owns more than 1,600 buildings, and each one has at least one expert who knows it inside and out—a property manager, who each day makes sure the grass is growing, the air conditioning is pumping, and the hallways are clean. As part of an initiative to reexamine the public spaces at existing GSA-owned and managed facilities, the Urban Development/Good Neighbor and First Impressions programs recently focused on the wealth of information property managers can provide. The two programs have been developing the *Property Manager's Guide to Public Space* with consultant Project for Public Spaces. The guide will provide property managers with an easy-to-use survey tool for evaluating their public spaces and will suggest short- and long-term solutions to common problems. These solutions take advantage of property managers' unique ability to improve interior and exterior public spaces from the ground up, thereby enhancing federal buildings both as workplaces and community amenities. Property managers who wish to provide feedback on the guide and survey tool—which will be complete in mid-2006—should contact Urban Development staff. Contact Brian Goldstein, (202) 208-2080.

New Commissioner “Planning” to Make a Positive Impact

GSA's Urban Development/Good Neighbor Program has a new team member—David L. Winstead, the new commissioner of PBS. Commissioner Winstead comes to GSA from the law firm of Holland and Knight, where he focused on zoning, land-use, planning, and transportation. He previously served as the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Transportation, which oversees Maryland's marine, air, and land transportation infrastructure and policy, including the state's public transportation. In addition, he has worked for innovative developer James W. Rouse & Company, and served as Executive Director of the Washington/Baltimore Regional Association and the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, both economic development non-profits. Although Commissioner Winstead is now in charge of the entire range of real estate activities that PBS encompasses, one of his priorities is to strengthen the Federal government's presence in urban areas with relation to land use, sustainability, and transportation. Commissioner Winstead is excited about opportunities to contribute to communities, and we are excited to have a new advocate for these goals. Contact Frank Giblin, (202) 501-1856.

Community Input Makes Better Projects

Community meetings related to large-scale projects are perceived as many things—a necessary bridge to cross, a chance for citizens to vent their frustrations, or even a hostile encounter between opposed interests. But a training session held in Washington, DC last fall taught GSA associates that community meetings can yield insightful feedback when they are organized and run effectively. The National Charrette Institute's Bill Lennertz led the Dynamic Planning Training session, where participants concentrated on three different GSA project types. GSA associates learned to develop inclusive stakeholder lists, plan project schedules that include many public feedback loops, and lead meetings where project teams and community members communicate respectfully and effectively. The resulting charrette process enables both GSA and local communities to have a project of which they are proud. GSA associates interested in participating in the next training should speak to Urban Development/Good Neighbor Program staff. Contact Frank Giblin (202) 501-1856.

A man is a success if he gets up in the morning and gets to bed at night, and in between he does what he wants to do.

Bob Dylan

Do You Want to Find Out More? Do You Have Ideas to Share?

We file each enews on our website at <http://www.gsa.gov/goodneighbor>. While you're there, you can check out other publications and policies, find the partners that can help GSA to be a good neighbor in your community, and get contact information for your local GSA representatives.

Please email questions, comments, & contributions—as well as mailing list additions and deletions—to Frank Giblin at frank.giblin@gsa.gov or Brian Goldstein at brian.goldstein@gsa.gov.